No. 7

An Inaugural Dissertation

On

Hæmorrhois

For the Degree of Doctor of Medicine

By

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In treating this subject, I shall not detain you Gentlemen with many preliminary observations, because I am well assured from your known liberality that you will not suspect doctrines novel, peculiar, or in any degree interesting, from a mere student who has only devoted the usual period of time alloted to him for the study of his profession; and that too under circumstances highly embarrassing, & truly calculated to impede the progress of his pursuits.

The disease, on which I propose to offer a few remarks, has been denominated Hoemorrhois, a term derived from the Greek words Aima Blood and Reo to flow, which in popular language is usually called Piles. Dr. Cullen in his nosological arrangement has placed it in his first Class Pyrexiæ and 38th Genus of the 4th order Hoemorrhagiæ

Dr. Chapman, however, in his more correct arrange-

ments of diseases according to the different parts of the system, in which they are principally situated, has in his lectures considered it as belonging to the Vascular System; and Dr Gibson in his invaluable surgical Lectures treats of it under the head of the diseases of the Rectum

This disease consists of Tumours situated in the vicinity of the anus which are either denominated external or internal piles, according to the circumstance of their being placed within or without the verge of the anus. Each tumor generally though not invariably discharges more or less blood, and from this circumstance the disease has received the name of Haemorrhois.

The internal Piles or those situated within the anus not unfrequently extend several inches up the Rectum. When placed however near the verge of the anus, they frequently become external, being protruded during the effort to void hardened faeces and prevented from resuming their original situation by the contraction of the Sphincter ani muscle.

The external Haemorrhois consists in a number of small spherical or oval tumours of different sizes, situated on the verge of the anus, or of a single tumour surrounding it somewhat resembling the Procidentia Ani. In the early stage of this disease these tumours are generally softish, flabby, and moveable, resembling in colour the contiguous parts; but soon becoming hard, immoveable, and of a redish or or purple colour.

It sometimes happens, that no Blood is discharged at any stage of the disease, and they are then called Haemorrhoides Cecae or Blind piles in contradistinction to the open or bleeding Piles.

It not unfrequently happens, that the tumours, instead of Blood, discharge a serous fluid, and then the disease has received the name of Haemorrhois Alba.

The quantity of Blood discharged from the open or bleeding piles varies considerably at different times, and is discharged under different circumstances; sometimes it flows freely, when the patient is at stool, and occasionally it occurs when no such efforts are made.

Leotard records a case, where the patient lost upwards of an hundred ounces of Blood in two days, and there are not wanting cases, where the Hemorrhages have been so profuse, as to destroy the lives of the unfortunate victims of this disease.

The danger to be apprehended from Hemorrhage is generally in proportion to the frequent recurrence of the disease. It has been remarked by some authors, that this disease recurs periodically; but what foundation there is for the observation, I cannot say; should it, however, be correct, I presume that the remark would chiefly apply to those, where the disease supervenes to irregular menstruation, and may be regarded chiefly as a vicarious discharge.

Although this disease is sometimes ushered in without any premonitary symptoms, its approach is generally marked by a sense of fullness, itching, and heat in and about the Anus, stupor, vertigo, headache, dyspnœa, gastric uneasiness, pain in the bowels, back, and loins, and generally considerable Pyrexia, the pulse frequently full, quick, and hard.

Of the causes of Hæmorrhois. Costiveness, I am inclined to believe, is one of the principle causes of this disease. The Fæces retained for some days in the Rectum, accumulating and becoming compact, operate in a two fold manner in the production of Hæmorrhois. In the first place, they produce a local irritation on the part, and secondly, they mechanically impede the free return of blood from the anus and lower part of the rectum, thus giving rise to that venous accumulation and distension, which may justly be regarded as the proximate cause of the disease.

We may also add, that the discharge of such hard and bulky fæces sometimes produces a protrusion of the rectum, upon which the Sphincter and Muscle contracts so forcibly, as to prevent its return, thus producing a temporary hemorrhoidal tumour round the anus, and rendering the part liable to future attacks of regular Hemorrhois.

Pregnant women are particularly liable to this disease from their bowels being generally in a constipated state, but more especially from the pressure of the gravid Uterus

on the Rectum.

Inflammation and enlargement of the Liver, by obstructing the passage of the Blood through the Vena Portæ, not unfrequently occasion the disease,

The frequent use of drastic purgatives, particularly the diffuse Aloetic preparations, which act principally upon the rectum, are generally considered as contributing to the production of Hæmorrhois

Riding on horse back and especially on hard trotting horses, by determining the blood to the hæmorhoidal vessels, is occasionally productive of their enlargement.

Hæmorrhois produced in the manner we have mentioned occurs for the most part as a local affection; but by frequent recurrence the disease becomes habitual, and forming morbid associations with other parts of the system, such a train of sympathetic connections is established, as to justly acquire for the disease a constitutional character.

In this sympathetic range, the Stomach is peculiarly & intimately affected, A diseased state of this organ sometimes announcing an approaching attack of

Hoemorrhois; and not unfrequently this disease assumes the genuine character of an Arthritic affection.

Having briefly described the disease and noticed its causes, we naturally come to the consideration of its diagnostic symptoms.

The diseases, with which this affection is likely to be confounded, are Venereal warts and Cancerous excrescences. The Venereal Warts are to be distinguished from Hemorrhoidal tumours, by their having a broad base and their rising indiscriminately from the verge of the anus and contiguous skin, and not from the intestine itself; they are also more flat and less elongated, Tender to the touch, though not painful, unless excited by irritating applications.

The difficulty of discriminating between Cancerous Excrescences and Hoemorrhoidal Tumours is greater, as they are both painful, indurated, and swollen; the Cancerous excrescences discharging disagreeable sanies, which has considerable resemblence to the mixed discharge arising from the blood of the hemorrhoidal tumours, and the mucous of the intestines; the bases of the cancerous excrescences are com=

monly broader base, less compressible, arising higher up in the rectum, traversing the whole circumference of the intestine, thereby producing such a conformation of the part as to render the expulsion of the feces difficult, which gives to them a somewhat flattened or angular form.

It sometimes, however, happens, that in cancerous affections of the Rectum the tumours have a softish rotten appearance, somewhat spongy feel, attended with an unceasing pain in the affected part, with shooting pains in the lumbar regions.

In Hæmorrhoidal tumours, although the pain is violent, it is not unremitting; both complaints are relieved by anodyne Enemas; but in cancerous complaints the relief is more temporary and less effectual; The painful sensation of these two affections materially differ by being more severe & lancinating in the cancerous.

There is little danger of confounding the procidentia ani with Hemorrhois., as the former is only the protrusion of the intestine itself, while the latter consists in a distension of the vessels of the part protruded without the verge of the anus, and generally in the form of distinct portions or

lobule.

Although it is an acknowledged fact, that Hæmorrhois, for the most part, is a disease not immediately dangerous; yet it must be admitted, that when neglected or mal-treated it not unfrequently becomes a prolific source of suffering to the patient and truly embarrasing to the practitioner.

In a curative point of view therefore this disease justly demands our most serious attention. Previously, however, to entering upon its treatment, we shall offer a few Prophylactic remarks. When an attack of Local Hæmorrhois is apprehended the various exciting causes, such as constipation, riding hard trotting horses, aloetic purges, sedentary habits, cold suddenly applied, and other like causes, should be most sedulously avoided.

Frequently Hemorrhois are apt to occur as a concomitant or consequence of some other disease, as affections of the stomach, liver, and sometimes from a diathetic condition of the system. In all such cases the primary complaint must be removed or mitigated, as a preliminary measure to one effectually relieving the hoemorrhoidal affection.

Treatment A Physician is rarely called or consulted in this complaint, until the disease has arrived at that state, in which it will be highly necessary to enjoin on the patient strict confinement to Bed in a recumbent position, and to avoid all food & drinks of a heating or stimulating quality, and to take such nourishment only as is of a light and laxative character. Should the disease have proceeded from a prolapsus ani, it will be necessary immediately, if practicable, to return the intestine and, with its reduction, the hemorrhoidal tumours generally subside, Sometimes, however, the prolapsed portion of intestine is in so debilitated or diseased a condition, that tonic and astringent remedies must be administered both locally and generally. The preparations of Kino, Alum, the extract of Persimmon, may be advantageously taken, and injections applied of cold water, super acetate of Lead, Sulphate of Zinc, decoctions of oak Bark, Persimmon, or Pavarian Bark, or pledgits of Lint or folds of linen wet with some one of these liquids applied directly over the anus and supported by the T bandage; after each fecal evacuation, should the intestine be protruded, great care

ought to be taken to immediately return it.

When Hemorrhoidal tumours appear externally as a local affection, the most speedy and effectual remedy, which can be used to subdue the inflammatory action, is the application of Leeches to the seat of the disease, repeating the application as often as the urgency of the symptoms may require their use. Leeches not only reduce the size of the Tumours and remove the inflammation, but tend essentially to relieve the pain & suffering of the patient. From what I have read and seen, I am well convinced, that venesection has been too much neglected in cases of Haemorrhoids, accompanied with general fulness of the system: This neglect has probably arisen from the apparent local nature of the complaint, accompanied by the belief, that the very small quantity of blood, which, in a general bleeding, would be taken directly from the diseased part itself, could not materially influence its state. The fallacy of this belief, however, must be obvious, when we reflect, that the expected advantage does not result so much from the mere loss of Blood, as from the subsidence of that state of general vascular irritation, which frequently accompanies

℞ Potassæ Super Tartrit. ʒj
Florum Sulphuris ʒj
Nitratis Potassæ ʒij Misce

this disease, and which has a direct tendency to determine the Blood to the affected part.

As costiveness not only produces the complaint, but necessarily aggravates & perpetuates it, Purgatives should be employed in the very commencement of the disease and they should generally be of the mildest kinds, It sometimes however becomes necessary, in consequence of the obstinately costipated condition of the bowels, to resort to more active medicines, such as Calomel combined with Rhubarb, Jallaps, or Castor oils. In most cases the C. oil alone will be found amply sufficient, When the Bowels have been freely emptied of their faecal contents, they may be kept sufficiently open by small & frequently repeated doses of C. Oil or what I have found to answer the purpose exceedingly well is the following formula, Viz:

℞ Potassæ Supertartras ℥j
Floris Sulphuris ℥j
Nitras Potassæ ℥ij M.

Of which one or two Teaspoonfulls may be taken every 3 or 4 hours in the day according to circumstances.

Rye Mush and Molasses has been found by Dr. Physick

To be an article of diet or laxative highly serviceable in the treatment of this disease; In many cases it has entirely superceded the necessity of using purgative medicines.

The inflammatory symptoms being greatly diminished and the tenderness of the tumors considerably abated, the Unguentum Salammoniac or Unguentum e Gallis with the addition of Laudanum or Powdered Opium are sometimes highly efficacious in removing the remainder of the disease.

Unguents or Plaisters of the various Narcotics have been found soothing and useful, particularly the extract of Hemlock and Stramonium

It sometimes happens, that after these various means have been faithfully adopted the Hemorrhoidal tumors still continue undiminished and troublesome, and require, for their complete eradication, a surgical operation.

All intelligent surgeons unite in recommending their excision but no little contrariety of opinion prevails in relation to the best mode of accomplishing it.

Without entering into a full discussion of the respective merits of the various operations proposed by different Surgeons.

I shall briefly notice those, which have received the sanction of some of the higher authorities of our profession.

Mr. Abernethy recommends the use of the Knife as equally safe, and much less painful than any other method.

Mr. Ware thinks, that the pain is occasioned by one or two tumours smaller and less prominent than the rest, and therefore advises, to be pulled down with a hook and cut off with the scissars.

Mr. Potts recommends the application of a ligature to only one tumour at a time, to be drawn so tight as effectually to cut off the circulation and thereby destroy the vitality of the tumor.

Dr. Physick, however, recommends the application of a wire and double Canula drawn so tight as to accomplish the same purpose in the space of 24 hours; the wire and canula is then removed, and the tumor drops off in a few days. under the application of a soft poultice of bread and milk.

This operation I should undoubtedly prefer because it does not subject the patient to danger from hemorrhage, which as the operations of Mr. Abernethy and Mr. Ware certainly do, and I should prefer it to Mr. Potts, because the same end

is accomplished in so much shorter time, and with infinitely less pain to the unfortunate subject of the malady; Should the base of the tumour, however, be too large to admit the application of a single ligature on the wire and Canula, a needle armed with a double ligature should be carried through the base, & each half tightly included in its respective ligature, when the seperation will effected in the manner already described.

We now come to the consideration of the internal piles. Some writers have doubted the propriety of checking the hemorrhage in this complaint, under the impression, that it is a salutary discharge; because in some cases of disease it has had a beneficial tendency. Of its beneficial effects in many instances there can be no doubt; When the disease however is entirely local, and there does not appear to be any particular condition of the system, the propriety of checking the hemorrhage may be regarded precisely in the same light as arresting Epistaxis, Hematemesis, Hemoptysis, Uterine Hemorrhage, or any other preternatural flow of Blood. When this disease has established intimate morbid relations with other parts of the system; the propriety of checking

the hemorrhage is more questionable; but when we reflect, that in some cases, the discharge of blood has been so profuse, as even to destroy the life of the patient, we are irresistably led to the conclusion, that it is at least our duty to moderate the discharge when excessive and ultimately to prevent its return.

Even in those cases of the disease consequent on irregular menstruation, should the discharge appear detrimental to the general health of the patient, there would be no impropriety in arresting its progress

When the disease is mild, and the discharge of blood not considerable, little else will be required, than to keep the bowels in a loose & soluble condition and attend strictly to the diet of the patient. When the pain and irritation are considerable, it is frequently necessary to extract blood, Great relief may often be obtained by the administration of 50 or 60 drops of Balsam Copaiva or Spirits of Turpentine every morning and evening. Narcotic Medicines have been highly recommended for the relief, & cure of this disease, Opium is in the hands of every practitioner,

and the claims of digitalis in the dose of 35 drops of the Tincture morning and evening have been strongly urged by Dr. McLean.

Tonics and astringent remedies are frequently indicated, and the Peruvian Bark and Alum have been found to answer the purpose in most cases.

In very alarming cases of Hemorrhage from Hemorrhoidal tumors, we should endeavour to restrain it by injecting into the rectum solutions of Super acetate of Lead or alum, or the decoctions of oak or Persimmon bark, or should these fail, by introducing a large bougie, or a piece of Pig's or sheeps intestine tied at one end, then inject into it cold vinegar and water so as to make strong & uniform pressure on the rectum.

These several means, having been resorted to ineffectually in a case, which menaced the life of the patient, I was induced from a knowledge of its effects in Hemoptysis Hematemesis, & Uterine Hemorrhage to try the powers of the Sugar of Lead & I have the pleasure to state, that the experiments eventuated in the happiest results; the

hemorrhage being restrained in a very short time, It was
given, to the best of my recollection, in doses of about
3 grains of the Superacetate of Lead, combined with ½ gr
of Ipecac and ½ gr of opium every half hour until
the hemorrhage was arrested
When the disease has arrived at that stage as to involve
the general system in its consequences, we should enter upon
the treatment of it with great caution; we should direct
our attention, in the first place, to the diet, exercise and
bowels of the Patient — rigid adherence to the antiphlo
gistic regimen, very moderate exercise and the frequent
exhibition of purgative medicines will be required pre
viously to our expecting much benefit from local applica
tions.
A mild Ptyalism, gradually induced and continued
for some time, has been found invaluable in cases
where hemorrhois has been cured after long standing.
Some Physicians have also advised in such cases, a
change of habits and removal to another climate
We have thus endeavoured, imperfectly we confess, to

fulfil the duty assigned us and upon reviewing our labours there remains but a faint hope, that we have accomplished our object; the gratification of the Medical faculty of the University of Pennsylvania.

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